



Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving Safety Awareness

As Americans, we will soon celebrate two long holiday weekends – Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving. On Veteran's Day, we honor those men and women who selflessly serve our country around the world and defend our freedom. On Thanksgiving, we remember and celebrate our Nation's countless blessings.

These four-day weekends are an excellent opportunity for our Eighth Army personnel, especially new arrivals, to get out and see the beauty of the Republic of Korea. Korea is a wonderful place to serve. Leaders should remind their Soldiers of the need to understand our Host Nation's rich heritage. Additionally, whether traveling, taking part in recreational activities, or relaxing at home over the Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving weekends, Soldiers must consider the risks associated with their plans. First line leaders must verify their Soldiers' plans and discuss ways to mitigate risks. I expect these discussions to include personal responsibility, alcohol use, indiscipline, the importance and benefits of using the "Buddy System", and adherence to our established readiness recall.

Chain of command intervention makes all the difference. Leaders must prepare their personnel for the hazards of off-duty activities and reinforce our standards of conduct. Over one-third of incidents involve the misuse of alcohol. Excessive alcohol consumption, road safety conditions, fall sports activities, domestic violence, and suicidal behavior continue to be areas of concern. All of us must do our duty: intervene in the lives of your people and make a difference. Engaged leadership, self-discipline, and risk management support the safety process and can ensure that the joy of this holiday period is not marred by accidents or misconduct.

We are very proud of each of you and consider it an honor to serve with you. Relax and enjoy these holidays.

Pacific Victors!

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